

SUTTON'S Sid Cann must be a very worried manager after Saturday's lame surrender to Wycombe's yet-to-be-extended Wanderers at Gander Green Lane.

The Blues have never had it so easy—either against United or, for that matter, at the start of a campaign.

Three wins in as many games, with seven unanswered goals, ranks them on a parallel to Football League pacesetters, Arsenal.

The subtle difference comes in the strength of opposition. Bertie Mee's boys have so far refused to stop for anyone; Brian Lee's squad hasn't had to. Dulwich, Woking and Sutton in turn never looked able to tax the champions.

Incredibly, Sutton offered only occasional, often downright casual resistance. Until a flurry late into the second half, their play gave little consequence to Wanderers' 2-0 lead.

Under the circumstances, Wycombe's final victory margin should have been wider. There was however small incentive for them to raise their game.

Yet again, the defence contained a punchless rival attack to such an extent that Wanderers could work untroubled using their powerful midfield trio as a springboard to goal.

Retaining Gerry Olsen and drafting in Dave Bulloch, Blues amply compensated the absence of injured squadmen Ian Rundle and Derek Gamblin.

Star player was Welsh international, Barry Davies. He prompted Wycombe's front-runners incessantly.

A slow start to proceedings seemed natural enough. Both sides kicked off with maximum points from two matches and considered the 90 minutes ahead to be their first true test.

But the prodding and probing ended abruptly in the 23rd minute. A long, exposing upfield pass caught Sutton on the hop. They confidently expected referee Barker to whistle Keith Searle offside.

Instead, as two men ran back to challenge, Wycombe's spearhead belted the ball goalward to notch his first, much deserved breakthrough of the new season.

A free kick out on the right from Davies again punished Sutton's complacency two minutes later. The ball cleverly fell shorter than United had envisaged. John Delaney waltzed forward from a wall of players stretched out on the far side of

**Sutton U. 0
Wycombe. 2**

**REPORT BY
Mike Whitesman**

WYCOMBE and Walton and Hersham are the only surviving 100 per centers after three games of the Isthmian programme — and both have yet to concede a goal. Wanderers top the table however by virtue of their superior scoring record.

goal, and headed his side two-up at 10 yards' range.

That, for the record, keeps big John out ahead as the Blues top marksman, with one penalty and two power-headers to his credit at the rate of a goal a game. He also turned in a commanding display at centre half.

For Sutton a two goal deficit meant the end. Only defender John Mears remained a steady influence at the back. And Graham Dennis, their lanky number ten, stood out as a lone force, both in attack and midfield.

Meanwhile goalkeeper Alan Thomas produced some first rate cover to keep Wycombe at bay.

Obviously Cann's rebuilding programme after a close-season exodus, has only just begun.

The period ebbed out in disappointing fashion. Although Dennis blazed into the second half with two narrowly close pot-shots, a Sutton revival never looked likely enough to restore any degree of excitement.

How vast a contrast to what so often develop into nail-biting encounters between the two rivals.

Wycombe had began the new period under attack. Not for long however.

A Larry Pritchard header, and a Micky Holifield kick both promised a goal during a 53rd minute scramble, which Thomas

curtailed by turning the latter's effort round for a corner.

Sutton in fact grew in danger of being swamped, as play entered its last quarter.

A foul by Mears on Gane in the 68th minute must have set Robby Williams wondering whether any justice remains. Twice booked for less controversial incidents in previous matches, he saw the Sutton number three receive merely a short lecture from Mr. Barker.

The referee's overall handling of the game came nonetheless as a pleasant change after recent events. He controlled play well, allowing it to flow whenever possible.

United — with the notable exception of Dennis — never convinced that they knew what to do with possession when they won it.

Briefly ex-Bromley centre forward, Jim Brown rushed through in the 75th minute. He rounded Olsen and slapped over a fine cross low to the near post. But John Maskell snapped the ball out of harm's way.

Sutton's late-found streak of enthusiasm continued. Eddie Webb wasted perhaps their slickest build up of the afternoon, allowing Delaney to cut out a short pass to Wilson inside the box.

And Wycombe's one true escape came with eight minutes to play when Bob Low stabbed the ball behind the pack—across an empty goalline, but wide of the far post.

Wycombe responded to Sutton's sudden change round and closed on an adventurous note, Holifield forcing a finger-tip save from Thomas to win a corner.

A minute later, Wycombe's number ten blasted high when presented with a none too easy chance by the hard running Searle.

But the result was long since beyond reasonable doubt — or interest!

SUTTON: Thomas; Strong, Mears, Butterfill, Powell, Hamilton, Webb, Low, Brown, Dennis, Wilson. Sub. Peck (not used).

WYCOMBE: Maskell; Birdseye, Olsen, Delaney, Bullock, Davies, Williams, Pritchard, Gane (sub. Hutchinson, 69 mins), Searle, Holifield.

Referee: Mr. J. Barker.

Half time: 0-2. **Goalscorers:** Wycombe—Searle (23), Delaney (25).